

ELIMU MAS ACADEMY
ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD UP TO 31st March 2024



PATRONS

Baron Ouseley Kt Sir Clive Lloyd CBE OA Diane Abbott MP

Rudolph Walker CBE Martina Laird Gurinder Chadha OBE Michaelene Holder-March

ELIMU MAS ACADEMY

**ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2024**

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**ELIMU MAS ACADEMY
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT - STATUTORY INFORMATION
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2024**

Trustees

Vino Patel
Patricia Jaggs
Nolan Simmons
Christina Cato
Tania Moore
Maurisa Coleman
Richard Renwick
Shilpa Bilimoria-Cherry

Principal Address of the CIO

Paddington Arts Centre
32 Woodfield Road
London W9 2BE

CIO Number

1171774

Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc
113 – 116 Leadenham Road
London EC3A 4AX

Independent Examiner

Meacher-Jones
Chartered Accountants
6 St John's Court
Vicars Lane
Chester
CH1 1QE

ELIMU MAS ACADEMY

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2024

The Trustees present their annual report and the financial statements of the charity for the period ended 31st March 2024. The statutory information is shown on Page 3.

Constitution and Charity Objectives

The Elimu Mas Academy (Elimu), previously Elimu Carnival Club, was registered in 2017 with the Charities Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

The object of the CIO is to promote the development of the arts and cultures of people of African, Asian and Caribbean descent and Global Majority communities through performances in street festivals and Carnivals and the provision of learning and artistic development opportunities in the creative arts & crafts of Carnival, the UK version of Trinidad's pre-Lenten festival of Mas, Music and Movement.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustees

The Founding Trustees set up the charity and elected a Board of Trustees to take over the management of the charitable funds of the Charity. There are eight Trustees.

Organisation

Elimu is administered by a board of eight Trustees which meets at least four times a year and a Management Committee meeting monthly for the day to day running of the Charity.

The CIO is also supported by several distinguished Patrons and Ambassadors and an Advisory Council of individuals experienced in key sectors and professions relevant to the activities and charity objectives.

Induction and Training of Trustees

Once a Trustee has been appointed, s/he is issued with written guidelines, the Constitution, relevant Charity Commission's publications and the current budget and Programme of Activities for the year to fulfil their role as Trustee.

To assist with their induction, new appointees will be partnered with a serving Trustee. All Trustees are made aware of their legal responsibilities as Trustees.

All Trustees meet quarterly and are in regular contact with the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Band Leader and Chair of the Management Committee.

The Board monitors the work of the Management Committee through the Chair of that Committee and Band Leader reporting directly to it. The Band Leader chairs the Management Committee.

Equality, Inclusion & Diversity

Elimu complies with the Equality Act 2010 and opposes direct and indirect discrimination on each of the nine protected characteristics plus geography, social class and spent criminal conviction.

Public Benefit

Elimu uses its donated funds and grants for its beneficiaries, regardless of where they live. Its resources are used to enable widespread public engagement and reach in the arts of Carnival and street festivals; to build the capacity of young people as artists, artisans & participants; to take artistic

risks; to promote excellence, innovation and quality in their creativity and to reward achievements, excellence and quality.

Elimu has a reputation as a respected voice of Carnival, challenging the cultural orthodoxy of Carnival and redefining the cultural ecology of street and festival arts.

As an Academy, we have 2 strategic and operational platforms for the delivery of our programmes – **Elimu Mas Band** (Arts in Motion) working in partnership with others, e.g. the Paddington Arts Centre and Westminster UNISON and performing units and agencies that participate in street festivals and Carnivals and a **Carnival Academy for Excellence** (CAFÉ - Each One Teach One) teaching, curating, archiving and promoting Carnival, Street and Festival Arts.

We believe that offering these opportunities to all is of a public benefit as well as a benefit to the individuals concerned with a specific interest in the Global Majority communities and those under and unrepresented in the creative arts industries.

The Trustees has paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and is satisfied that Elimu is fulfilling its responsibilities regarding public benefit.

Activities in 2023/24

A full report of our activities is appended as Appendix A.

Risk Management

The Trustees have examined the major strategic, business, creative and operational risks that the charity faces and confirm that systems have been established to enable regular reports to be produced so that the necessary steps can be taken to lessen and mitigate these risks.

Reserves Policy

It is the policy of the Academy to maintain unrestricted funds which are the free reserves of the charity at a level of not less than £5,000. This has been a major challenge as its income is substantially reliant on public funding, a condition of which is not to carry over any surplus grant or underspend.

Investment Policy

The Trustees do not have an investment policy.

A member of the Board of Trustees and the Management Committee has the portfolio of Treasurer and is the lead on the financial and fiduciary duties of the Academy.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

Trustees are required, under the Charities Act 2011, to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the charity's financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing those financial statements giving a true and fair view, the Trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charity will continue in operation.

Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with applicable law and regulations. They are also responsible for

safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approval

This report was submitted to the Trustees via an online digital platform and was approved on 1st October 2024.



Vino Patel
Chair, Board of Trustees
Elimu Mas Academy

25 November 2024

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2024

I report on the accounts of the CIO for the period ended 31 March 2024 which are set out on pages 7 to 11.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of financial statements.

The charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act,
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 145 (5) (b) of the Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

Our examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners.

An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as Trustees concerning any such matters.

The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with the examination, no matter has come to our attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met
- (2) to which, in our opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Meacher-Jones
6 St John's Court
Chester CH1 1QE

25 November 2024

ELIMU MAS ACADEMY
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES 2023/24

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Unrestricted</i>	<i>Restricted</i>
Income			
ACE Grant	£100,000	£0	£100,000
Earned Income	£16,171	£16,171	£0
Private income	£13,085	£13,085	£0
Support in Kind	£13,732	£0	£13,732
Total Income	£142,988	£29,256	£113,732
Expenditure			
Artistic Costs	£76,276	£0	£76,276
Organisation development	£16,500	£0	£16,500
Marketing	£10,711	£0	£10,711
Overheads	£24,068	£0	£24,068
Other	£1,697	£0	£1,697
Support in Kind	£13,732	£0	£13,732
Total Expenditure	£142,984	£0	£142,984
Net Movement in Funds	£4	£29,256	(£29,252)
Transfer between funds	£0	(£29,252)	£29,252
Movement in funds for the year	£4	£4	£0

Reconciliation of Funds

Total funds brought forward	£13,750	£7,563	£6,187
Total Funds Carried Forward	£13,754	£7,567	£6,187

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised during the year.

ELIMU MAS ACADEMY

NOTES TO THE STATEMENT

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgments and key sources of estimation and uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with *Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice* applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the *Financial Reporting Standard* applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) and Charities SORP (FRS 102) as amended by Update Bulletin 1 issued in February 2016.

The Academy meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

Assets and Liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

- Tangible fixed assets
There are no fixed assets
- Taxation
The charity is exempt from taxation under section 521 to 536 of the Income Tax Act 2007 (ITA 2007).
- Pension
The charity does not employ any staff and do not operate a pension scheme.

Preparation of the Accounts on a going concern basis

The Academy has reported a net movement in funds of **£4** in the year.

The uncertain economic outlook, Brexit and the unwillingness of the public, corporates and Trusts to donate to or sponsor the Academy plus uncertainty of how commercial sponsors will be seen by the organisers of the Notting Hill Carnival are significant areas of uncertainty which the Trustees have mitigated by reviewing all the activities of the charity to ensure compliance with grant aid and sponsorship conditions and regular reviews of income generation from sales of Carnival costumes.

The Academy was one of a limited number of Carnival bands to secure ACE funding this year and so Trustees are therefore of the view that the immediate future of the Academy for the next 12 to 18 months is secure and that on this basis the charity is a going concern.

Income

All incoming resources are included in this Statement of Financial Activities when the charity has legal entitlement to the income, any performance conditions attached to the item of income have been met and it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Donated Services and Facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the Academy has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the Academy of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably.

In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the Academy which is the amount the Academy would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Interest Receivable

The Academy does not hold any funds on deposit and so no interest is receivable.

Resources Expended

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

The Trustees neither received nor waived any emoluments during the year.

Funds

The Restricted Funds are restricted income funds given to the charity for specific purposes. They are expendable by the Trustees in furtherance of particular projects within the charity objects.

The Unrestricted Funds are funds expendable at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the objects of the charity.

APPENDIX A:

END OF YEAR REPORT 2023/24

INTRODUCTION

With CRF 1 & 2 funding in 2020/21, we strengthened our infrastructure, strategies, programmes & Arts & Business Development Plan for post pandemic resilience & artistic continuance. This funding enabled us to escalate quality, promote excellence & diversify public engagement during the testing period of Covid restrictions, remain a respected voice & provide opportunities for artists & bands to network, maintain continuity of artistic practices with a successful development programme (11 bursaries & 121 sessions with 9 artists), represented EMCCAN, NHCL & UKCCA on DCMS Festivals Working Group & posted 6+ Arts Groundings on YouTube & website, republished our learning materials (Lost at Carnival, KS 1-2 Learning Modules, A – Z of Carnival) & prepare for the return of the road parade; challenging the made to order manufactured creativity (beads, bums & bikinis) of Fun & Pretty Mas.

Returning to that level of engagement in 2022 was a major challenge. However, Darren Henley stated that *“talent is everywhere...opportunity is not”* and this resonated with our determination to open *“the Palace gates from the inside”* to everyone to experience Carnival arts, not just the Caribbean diaspora.

For 2023/24, with a National Lottery Project Grants of £100,000, we aimed to build on these achievements and reintroduce the platforms that we had established since 2020 with CRF funding, pre-pandemic.

Thus our 2023/24 programme, as part of a continual developmental process from 2021, was our most challenging one that not just returned us to ‘normal’ with our traditional fare – performances, arts/skills development, public outreach/engagement – but elevated our activities with innovative & enhanced features to secure our position as a leader in the arts of Carnival; exciting, inspiring, educating with flourishes of high quality, excellence & innovations.

For this financial year, we planned to offer a programme of 25 activities (Appendix C) to enrich understanding of Mas (Dis is Mas) with 3 key messages (No Planet B, Dis is Mas & White people contributed) enshrined in our creations of music, dance and Mas and with a focus on young & budding creatives, partners and underrepresented communities and individuals from London’s diverse Global Majority communities.

This report is a comprehensive review of our programmes for the year 2023/24; the activities we delivered and the outcomes we achieved, planned and unplanned. It is based on the views of all participants – partners, parents, performers, volunteers, creatives, supporters, staff, judges and host organisations – and Zoom and public meetings of Academy members, Independent Peer Reviewers (IPR) and members of our governing bodies. All participants were invited to submit End of Project reports that included recommendations for 2024/25. Creatives were required to do so as part of their commission.

We also invited a selection of respondents, randomised, to complete a questionnaire (Appendix A). Twelve were completed and the analysis was used to accompany the data from other assessment exercises.

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

Defining Carnival, the event, as the Masquerade, known as the Mas, its creative crucible as the Mas Camp, its learning hub the Academe & its performance spaces as the public realm (Gayelle), we used these four platforms to deliver our programme of activities and their planned outcomes.

In summary, the completed activities were:

- Gave 11 creatives their own space to design, make and display their creations
- Supported the artistic development of 10 artists mentored by 10 skilled practitioners
- Promoted a taxonomy of Mas & showcased exemplars for each in NHC
- Curated & participated in 24 of 25 public events - street and staged
- Partnered/Commissioned national & International artists & organisations
- Introduced a recycling & refashioning of costumes programme
- Increased children's participation with 25 children in free costumes
- Returned, with diverse representation, to Pride in London and Glastonbury
- Addressed 3 Secondary Schools on Carnival Arts – History & Achievements

This programme of activities made up of 25 events was delivered Post-Brexit, Post Covid 19, Post COP 26 & Post BLM and made more difficult in the face of a cost-of-living crisis that impacted in serious ways with Elimu being able to meet its projected costume sales targets and offer attractive commissions and fees to elevate the quality of the art forms, displays and performances.

Where there were challenges in the delivery of any of the 25 events, we took steps to refocus, replan and revise features and outcomes giving due consideration to any potential or adverse impact on our budget. Only one event had to be completely cancelled and one creative defaulted on the completion of his Monarch Mas. In all others, we delivered all 24 activities.

I believe the security could have been a lot better. The stewards (not our usual team) had to be continuously guided in holding the rope, ensuring the space for the costumes was wide enough etc. It takes a lot of observational skill to ensure the children are safe and to ensure the stewards are maintaining safety for all of us.

Our activities were delivered through three creative spaces – The Mas Camp, Academe and Artists' Studios.

The **Mas Camp** was multi-functional - an online/actual trading outlet, a production base & a public space to make, decorate & display costumes, rehearse routines & popularise the musical performance scores (Road Marches) & attract visitors with a free programme of Carnival Limes (Trini Socials) & Live broadcasts via our Community Radio broadcasts (DJ Piper).

Our Mas camp and the limes were almost non-existent this year, which I found quite disappointing. There were no sample costumes on sight. I had to wait until in the day to collect my t-shirt why? We've never had this protocol previously.

Significant changes made to the terms of our occupation of the Mas Camp venue – Paddington Arts Centre – severely affected the delivery of our programme.

Our **Academe** was a virtual Gayelle (arena for contested explorations) that bloggers, residents, practitioners, aficionados & academics could experience online (PCs/Tablets in the Mas Camp) or live events with visitors and members who engaged in 8+ impromptu discourses (Groundings) that highlighted artistic practices, exemplars, innovations & topical events.

Our two Monarch Mas practitioners from Trinidad delivered some of these Grounding Sessions post Notting Hill Carnival.

The personal creative spaces, **Artists' Studios**, that each artist used outside the four weeks of the Mas Camp.

I would have liked a bit more interaction time at the Mas Camp with more costume-making-finishing with other masqueraders on the Saturday. I do feel that this is always an opportunity to meet, talk, help, develop relationships, and to learn from each other.

We had planned for these three creative spaces to be a celebration of the mas, music, crafts, dance & heritage of Carnival Arts by showcasing leading Carnival artists, in performances & in conversation with the public. Though planned as three separate & distinct platforms, financial pressures (the rental costs for any period more than 4 weeks) meant that we had to integrate all three into one continuous engagement, delivered by one set of volunteers & practitioners. Each complimenting the other and activities integrated into the timetables of each.

The Mas Camp at Paddington Arts Centre housed the three weeks of the Carnival Summer School during the day that overlapped with four weeks of adult activities in the evenings and at weekends. As part of the Carnival footprint, we were able to attract visitors wanting to experience the Carnival vibe and ambience, experience the production of costumes, hear the popular songs that will be played on the road and on weekends, get a taste of celebrations akin to a Mini-Carnival.

I missed seeing the costumes at the Band's Premiere. I just couldn't get to the Centre on time. A second show would have been great. I asked but no one took any notice of my request. I know that many others were in the same boat. You lost some customers there.

Many participants found this integrated programme over the six weeks prior to the Notting Hill Carnival, our premiere platform, more appealing as they were able to dip in and out of activities.

The benefit of having a Mas Camp on the Carnival footprint enabled direct access to the public & the partnership with Paddington Arts Centre resulted in a focus on children & teens. Tackling under representation of global majority communities were not evident in registration or sales, in part due to the impact of the cost-of-living crisis.

The focus on targeting children & teens has resulted in 30 children registering to participate in the Summer School and at the Carnival Sunday & Kingston Carnival. The appeal of free costumes & robust safeguarding attracted families to join the Sunday parade. We reviewed this target but confirmed that the risks of increased numbers could not be mediated. We reverted to just accepting 25 children in costumes.

With our commissioning of creatives, Carnival bursaries & creative partners, we have attracted numbers not historically linked to Carnival, especially young men. The cost-of-living crisis was a major stumbling block for participants to buy costumes and Play Mas. The phenomenal increases in materials have also forced creatives to increase their production fees making the selling price of costumes out of the reach of many. We have sought to overcome this by subsidising final prices but with limited success. We also decided that any unsold costumes from specified designers would be withdrawn from sales and offered, instead, in 2024.

The net effect of these measures was an increase in performers opting for t-shirts. However, we hope that access to affordable shirts will lead to costume wearing next year.

Creatives ways to develop the T-shirt Mas to make it more effective as a Carnival costume.

There were 2 seminal activities that made our programme distinctive and successful: Carnival Bursaries & Mas in Performance.

CARNIVAL BURSARIES

We successfully completed our Carnival Arts Bursary Programme (Appendix B).

We offered 10 bursaries of 4 weeks duration in Carnival Arts to creatives, mentored by experienced artists, to enhance their skills & knowledge. There was overwhelming praise for this programme that targeted creatives in every genre of Carnival arts plus event management of Carnival. Each of the 10 mentors and mentees have produced detailed reports on their experiences and the Manager of this programme has produced her End of Project report that fed into this review.

In summary, the key recommendations made were:

- Additional opportunities to continue the engagement with the mentor
- Greater clarity of the terms of the bursary, timings & expectations
- Formal recognition of having completed the bursary
- Duration of bursaries to be determined by the nature of the art form.

We have a waiting list of 25 creatives wanting to be considered for 2024.

Examples of a successful completion of a Bursary

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=bed73bb23d&attid=0.4&permmsgid=msg-f:1778280301427262767&th=18adb8832da5852f&view=att&disp=inline>

MAS IN PERFORMANCE

In partnership with others, we stamped our presence to critical acclaim and widespread media presence with our signature street events (Pride in London, the Notting Hill & Kingston Carnivals (Hackney was cancelled), The Maida Hill Mini-Carnival & the Glastonbury Festival); each event used as a celebratory testimonial of the jubilation of Carnival's return to the national Artscape.

Your Moko Jumbies were exceptional. The only band that brings these traditional Mas on the road each year. Beautiful costumes.

We were judged second place in Notting Hill Adult Carnival Band competition, third place in the Competition for the Best Soca DJ (Sunday) and first place in the Monday competition; the judges complementing us for our distinctive refashioning of the performance orthodoxy of the typical band. Each designer being given their own space, not constrained by a theme, to showcase their creativity in costume & dance and each DJ encouraged to mix tunes that appeal to all ages. Our performances at each of the 24 events – street & staged – attracted large audiences and were attractive and excellent representations of all six genres of Mas – Monarch, High, Dutty, Fun/Pretty, Street Fashion & T-shirt.

In 2022, we were the first Carnival Band ever to participate in Pride in London & Glastonbury, both events providing us with unique experiences. We returned in 2023 inviting the whole of the Carnival sector to join us at both events. For Pride, UCOM, UNISON Westminster and the two staff networks of RBK&C and City of Westminster joined our performance in costume or branded t-shirts. There was extensive press coverage of the band at both events.

We introduced two Monarch Mas from Trinidad, designed by Deron Attzs, and together with Rubadiri Victor, supported both visiting creatives to host several workshops and performances in the UK. Two

other Monarch Mas performers from Derby also played an important part in our presentation plus a Monarch Queen created by Shari Royer, the first time she created a large-scale costume, mentored by Ansel Wong.

This is the first time any band performed with 5 Monarch Mas on the road.

Introduce (reintroduce) to the Elimu Carnival procession a Steelband side on wheels with electronic amplification, of course in compliment to the DJ brigade.

We have an OPEN-DOOR policy, encouraging artists to design and dance their own costumes, allowing them to participate by not levying any fee for participation. Four creatives took advantage of this and produced some elaborate and distinctive creations for their friends that pleased onlookers. We have encouraged them to consider designing a Section Mas for 2024 that could appeal to a younger, more diverse audience.

We achieved our goal to secure representation of all six genres of Mas in the band. The only time a presentation at Notting Hill Carnival featured every genre of Mas.

At first, your band looked a mish mash. All different costumes and all different colours and shapes. You even had people blacked up. They looked like a Devil Mas. What is the point? I don't get it. I thought Dutty Mas was for Sunday only.

Our performances continued to promote a choreographic 'vocabulary' to challenge the sexual simulations of the Wukking Up. In addition, we commissioned our DJs to ensure an integration of music with the choreography of the costumed performers, not for street partying or members of the public following the band. Regrettably, as in 2022, this was breached again this year at key stages of the route causing some serious disruption of the performance with players in costume being overwhelmed.

We did not comply with our expressed zero tolerance of non-Carnival music by a strict observance of the Carnival's music policy. We deviated from this to appeal to the youths & millennials among the band. However, one deviation was cited by NHCL as an exemplar of how the interpretation of the music policy can be integrated in the modernity of emerging art forms. Our DJs were singled out for integrating popular urban music with Soca rhythms. This is still outside the terms of the NHC music policy and we will champion this development for approval in 2024.

I was very disappointed that yet again, Elimu has failed to give us Carnival music on the road. Notting Hill is Carnival. Afro Beats and Reggaeton have no place in our Carnival.

The organisers of Notting Hill Carnival imposed a sanction on us for an alleged breach of our participation agreement in 2022 – exclusively branding one of our musical floats with the corporate livery of HOME, one of our sponsors. We believe that this influenced the reduction of our vehicle passes from 3 to 2. At one fell swoop, we were deprived of a substantial income stream (£27,000) that impacted on the delivery of our programme & its appeal to players. In addition, the reduction of vehicle passes impacted on the attractiveness of our infrastructure and all-inclusive services and was a disincentive to performers deciding to join the band.

It became obvious that many performers had reservations about paying the elevated costs of costumes that resulted from this loss of income from HOME plus fractured supply lines, high freelancers' fees & minimal on-the-road services.

Mas Bands are still creating costumes traditionally for a horizontally oriented spectacle but the parade route does not facilitate this. A conversion needs to be made to backpacks and other techniques so that movement and spectacle feature vertically.

We made an immediate revision of our budget to reflect the impact of these setbacks. To mitigate these, we modified the entrepreneurial basis of participation, offering substantial discounts & offering recycled costumes, pro bono, with a modified All-Inclusive fee. We offered 25 children free costumes.

Other designers, notably Colin Julien of Caribbean Sessions Mas, also donated costumes for use in all costumed events to encourage the recruitment of performers & for Pride, Glastonbury & Kingston, we relied heavily on the volunteer support of performers. We used these donations to curate recycling and refashioning sessions for players who could use the product as their personal costume with just a small outlay of money.

I wanted to interact with the young people more deeply, as it involves more than just passing information about the Mas and the culture and the activities because I didn't just want to come in as a masquerader to play Mas only but to share my knowledge and experience as masquerader and cultural ambassador.

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

We can report on our achievements in other main areas as follows:

a) Sector Leadership

Elimu has an acknowledged reputation as one of the leading bands in the Carnival sector pushing at artistic boundaries and willing to offer support and advice to bands and their leaders. Through creative partnerships we share experiences and ideas and work together to achieve our collective goals and ACE Project funding has enabled us to provide extensive Support in Kind to 15 Carnival bands, 12 individual artists &, for the first time in 2023, the Cayman Islands communities in the UK (Cayman Connection).

With several bands not receiving their normal annual ACE project grant, we were in high demand to offer guidance, support and services to enable bands to participate in performances. We offered our facilities to NHCL & CAMF to facilitate their engagement with Carnivalists.

Elimu has shared their wealth of creative knowledge on how to bring our creative vision to reality. We also share our skills and knowledge with their members and associates. Through Elimu, we learnt how to plan and digitally document our workshops for futures reference.

Several of these bands are members of our Cultural and Educational Partnership aimed at confronting the many issues challenging the artistic and operational development of Carnival particularly for children and young adults.

As partners, we advised on ACE grant applications, pooled resources, shared discounts from providers and integrated operational and management services to enhance proficiency and guarantee compliance with both advisory and legal regulations and conditions of grant aid, especially issues around creative diversity, environmental responsibilities and ACE Outcomes & Investment Principles.

In addition, we hosted bands requiring space, our Mas Camp, to distribute their costumes.

Notting Hill Carnival Monday ended in a serious and sour note for the band with the arrest of the Deputy Bank Leader for an alleged assault on a Senior Police Officer. This was vigorously contested but she ended up being found guilty of the offences.

As Elimu was not able to use public funds to support her, individual donations were made towards her legal costs by 3 members of the Management Committee.

We were refused an ACE grant yet again. Even when we resubmitted the application. We are doing the same event each year. Nothing changes. Yet despite getting a grant in 2022 for the same programme, we were refused. Only the theme changed. How could that be possible? You have been great in guiding us on our application. I know you didn't do anything wrong. We got our grant in the past with the same information. We do almost the same thing every Carnival. I think that Elimu and CVT should confront the Arts Council about this. It is scandalous.

b) Artistic Development

Elimu has been performing Mas since 1980, punching above our weight by nurturing strategic, commercial, operational and artistic partnerships; diversifying our performance base and gaining an international reputation for championing the arts of Carnival.

Our current Arts Development Plan commits us to become a London Academy of significance by brokering extensive networks & partnerships; finding ways to diversify engagement & participation; encouraging artistic risks & leading the Carnival Sector in innovations, excellence & quality.

Three issues – To better integrate our themes and costume design for future years to be clear on strategic messaging and come together as one; more organised 'truck protocol', involving a Cayman Connection staff member & to collaborate on more activities in the lead up to the event day itself.

Our 2023/24 programme was planned to achieve the 7 goals of this Arts Development Plan targeting 3 significant weaknesses (participation levels, engagement with young creatives, children's costumes) & to mark the end of Covid restrictions with a 'jubilation' of our & Carnival's return with a bang.

This programme contributed to ACE's ambition to allow Carnival Arts to flourish and enable open access to a full range of high-quality experiences. We faced several challenges and took small steps to manage these challenges. We changed the commercial/artistic relationship with participants – sponsors, creatives, performers & volunteers - to prioritise engagement, performance & artistry by discounting fees & costs, offering free costumes to others & focusing on volunteer help. As the situation worsened with poor costume sales, we removed the burden of costume fees, targeting 25 children to get free costumes and reducing the all-inclusive fee, from £75 to £60.

We continued our efforts to put children & young adults at the centre with development opportunities – Touring Ensemble, Bursaries, Summer School – to enhance competency levels, generate enthusiasm & reward effort. This meant expending less efforts strengthening our signature feature - refashioning of t-shirt/Fun/Dutty Mas into ELEGANT MAS. The financial pressures to add appendages to the traditional t-shirt or use blouses or Polo shirts put these options beyond our reach – financially & artistically. We would not have recovered costs from sales had we just blinged or distressed t-shirts. We returned to the default position – providing space & tools so individual performers, under the direction of our volunteer designers, could distress (cut, knot, tie) their own shirts.

However, we benefitted from sponsorship of t-shirts from the Savile Row Academy for Notting Hill & Pride. And from UNISON Westminster and the Staff Networks from 2 boroughs for Pride t-shirts. This financial support helped us to cover a large part of the loss of the HOME sponsorship.

b) Finance

This was our largest ACE Project Grant (£100k) & we knew from the outset that we faced major challenges to mitigate the impacts of Post-Covid, Post-Brexit & Post COP 26 (supply lines, materials,

services). In addition, the physical return of Carnival in a second year overshadowed the Mas Playing on the streets with audiences joining the parade. The celebration and jubilation of the return by audiences dominated in 2022 and all the expectations were to have this focus continue into 2023. And preferred participation for the majority was in street clothes. And t-shirts.

This is exactly what happened.

We were forced to make substantial financial adjustments & seek creative ways of managing the budget to secure planned levels of participation & engagement.

Income from costume and t-shirt sales took the greatest hit as retail costs proved unacceptable to many, leading loyal performers to opt for t-shirts. The priority was to ensure that we balanced our budget, make savings in every item and renegotiated terms of engagement with key suppliers – security, technical services, subsistence - and leading practitioners to secure more preferential deals, staggered payments & discounted costs with a promise of a reward to engage them again in Carnival 2024.

You failed to market the costumes to compete with the other bands. Were you just relying on loyal people returning? I will always choose Elimu but my friends were attracted to other bands. The Band Launch was too late.

When NHCL reduced our supporting vehicles to just two, we lost our major sponsor, HOME, resulting in a yawning hole in our income, a reduction in the number of supporting vehicles & a dent in our appeal to performers.

We were less successful in our crowd funding efforts and the Sponsor a Youth Programme. There is clearly a need for more dedicated support to help push these programmes. Reliance on volunteers without adequate specialist or skilled management was a major weakness. However, with a very tight control of our budget, we delivered all our activities & engaged creatives without overspending.

c) Audience Engagement & Reach

Each year, we have increased the number of artists and performers and widened our reach to more diverse audiences. At several stages this year, we feared that we would not be able to attract, recruit or engage with our audiences & once we knew that we would only have 2 supporting vehicles for Notting Hill, we increased our marketing of the band championing participation in all events.

Elimu do continue to share your knowledge and skills to help keep the arts of Carnival alive with the local and wider community. We need an event for carnival artists to exhibit their work and to demonstrate their creative skills.

We emphasised the diverse range of costumes – Costumes representing all 6 genres – plus examples of signature creations from Trinidad and Alan Vaughan’s Moko Jumbies. We offered participants costumes that were the fusion of Couture, Mas and Fashion PLUS Fun Mas with the beads, bikinis and feathers and the ‘bacchanalists’ could still don a t-shirt and enjoy themselves on the road. A genuinely all-inclusive band.

For each of these constituencies, we provided an all-inclusive experience that included less features of previous years and an encouragement for performers to provide their own supplements to what we could offer. For wheelchair performers, we offered free costuming with sessions to decorate their wheelchairs by experienced practitioners.

We provided limited opportunities for seniors and those with restricted mobility to join our performances. For Notting Hill this was due to being restricted to just 2 vehicles that could not accommodate individuals on the lorries. The Police have reinforced regulations that forbade passengers on the music lorry outside the Carnival footprint, thus forcing performers with restricted mobility to walk back to our Mas Camp or their point of entry to the parade route. This restricted participation by seniors and those with a disability. The cost of such a service is prohibitive (specialised transport from Ladbroke Grove to Woodfield Road) and we need to find ways of meeting these costs if we are to meet our goal of creative diversity.

In 2023/24, we facilitated participation for seniors along the route up to the Judging Zone where they can peel off and secure a reserved seat.

Our engagement with our publics and audiences is underpinned by an acknowledgement that, at our performances, they are 'kettled' behind crush barriers. And few of our performances are aimed to engage with the mass of audiences behind those barriers. We tried to choose 'stages' along the route to perform our choreographed cameos but this was not possible at any part of the NHC parade route. It was unsafe to do so.

Some of my concerns are: Poor communications, No proper planning ahead for events, Disrespectful ways of speaking to each other. The music side there's a lack of trust. You are given a position with Elimu but you always get override with your responsibility. There are so much that the band can be doing for the year but you don't get the support. Some of us eat and breathe Carnival. Some of us are just there for carnival in London.

The situation at Pride, Glastonbury & Kington enabled us to be fully engaged with audiences along the route. With less spectators along the route, we were able to engage with the audiences. There was no urgency to be continually on the move and so we were able to 'dance the costumes' & encourage children & families in the audience to join in without any restrictions.

We are one of few bands that offer the physical presence of a Mas Camp. The opportunity to visit and spend time at a Mas Camp – the engine room for the production of costumes and the focal point for public engagement – is a bonus to boost audience engagement and reach. The Camp was open each day for 4 weeks in August.

d) Safeguarding & Child Protection

Because of our heritage and partnership with Paddington Arts Centre, children and young people are a major component of our work. Together with Paddington Arts Centre, we jointly manage our roles and responsibilities for the safeguarding and protection of children and young adults. In all our programmes, steps are taken to ensure that all staff and volunteers take the necessary action to enable all children and young people participating in the band to have the best outcomes. We promote their welfare and protect them from harm.

I saw you advert for free children costumes and applied. Only to be told that they were sold out. You took my money. My child is disappointed. Please refund my money?

However, the steps we took to ensure adequate compliance with statutory regulations on safeguarding took a heavy toll on our budget. But we delivered as all staff volunteered to engage beyond their committed hours, were already DBS certified and undertook training in event management and stewarding, at their own expense.

I know that NHCL says a band must have at least 50 children. There is no way we can manage more than 25. We will have to increase our staffing substantially to support 50 children. We couldn't have any more kids in the Band. The ratio of adult carers to children were off. We were at capacity.

There have been some major changes, some anticipated & some unplanned & unexpected.

We lost our major sponsor (Home £27k) because of the imposition of sanctions by NHCL which excluded the use of commercial sponsors. This together with the withdrawal of some key partners, led to a radical revision of our budget and the seeking of alternative funds from other more acceptable partners. These include successful engagement with UNISON Westminster & Savile Row Academy.

Our partnerships have increased extending the range of Carnival art forms represented in the parade. Two partners – Cayman Connection, Burroquets – enhanced the thematic approach of our presentation – The protection of marine life in the climate crisis & Windrush 75.

Our activities have been increased with demands from many agencies for our expertise, support & participation because of the focus on Windrush 75. The impact on our budget is minimal as personnel involved in the delivery of new activities have provided them pro bono or as part of their role in the band.

e) Environmental Responsibilities

Elimu's measurement of the environmental impact of its activities has been subsumed into that of Paddington Arts Centre that houses our Mas Camp. Registration with Julie's Bicycle & use of its calculations did not result in any specific Elimu data.

There is no benchmarking or data to enable any comparisons from project to project or year to year. In 2023, we began a robust imposition of strategies and actions to give flesh to our paper commitments.

Elimu has endorsed the Green Events Code of VISION2025. We have committed ourselves to the principles, overall aim & have selected & endorsed minimum standards, practices & targets that are directly relevant to a Carnival band.

In 2023, we began to collect data to determine how well we have done in achieving the following by a specified date:

- inserting sustainability in MoUs & contracts with all service providers & consultants (done)
- draft & approve a Zero Emissions Action Plan by March 2024
- eliminate single use plastics by Carnival 2025
- initiate a water conversation & saving plan on the road & in the Mas Camp by Carnival 2024
- eliminate food waste & re-purpose left over edible food (done)
- year on year reductions of meat & dairy consumption on the road (done)
- encourage members & visitors to minimise travel and transport & use public transport to and from the Mas Camp (done)
- avoid waste, prioritising reuse, recycling & increased storage for surplus materials & costumes (initiated)
- single registration with Julie's Bicycle & use of their carbon calculators to measure the environmental impact of performance & production processes (April 2024)
- reduce power requirements & fuel consumption on the road (initiated)
- calculate our power needs on the road at each Carnival & set individual Carnival targets to reduce year on year (incomplete)
- accelerate the introduction of an electric music float by 2024 & in the interim, choose generators that reduces power draw & requirements by 20% (incomplete)

Data collected on all the above will now be benchmarked to measure progress from 2024 and initiate any changes of our targets for 2024/25.

We have submitted a request to NHCL to be one of the bands to use one of their electric floats in 2024 & seek sponsorship as cost for one is £30,000+

Paddington Arts Centre's reports and registration with Julie's Bicycle are for both organisations and we have continued to take steps to reduce waste and manage our carbon footprint. However, the recording of this is poor. Data relates to Paddington Arts Centre and so we are unable to certify what reductions Elimu made.

We need to review our registration with Julie's Bicycle (April 24) and initiate data collection and monitoring for Elimu, disengaging from Paddington Arts Centre (July 2024).

Before we began this project, an audit was made of the materials held in our storage unit so that purchases can only be authorised if materials held in store are not suitable for use. All creatives are given details of these materials and invited to visit the storage unit to identify any materials for their creations.

f) Creative Diversity

Success in diversity, inclusivity & equality was measured by:

- diverse partners (2 bands, 13 artists & artisans, 4 guest performers)
- 10 global majority female artists
- eradication of simulated sex choreography in our performance (partial)
- protective measures for vulnerable girls on the route (done)
- no play lists of homophobic lyrics/incitement to violence (done)
- costumes for physically challenged & wheelchair performers (done)
- artistic crossovers: music, dance & Mas (partial)
- an integrated performing unit of 6 genres of Mas on Carnival Monday (done)
- 50% credit for donated costumes, used & new (done)
- no participation fees for individuals with their own costumes (done)
- free costumes for 25 children (done)
- 6 performances to diverse audiences & venues (done)
- all 6 genres of Mas presented at NHC (done)
- free and open access to independent female creatives to participate in their own creations (done)
- circa 20 performers new to Carnival and from underrepresented communities (done)

We gathered information and data from samples of participants for the 6 genres of Mas and attendance at the Mas Camp for each of the nine protected characteristics and encouraged members to complete our monitoring forms in full. We have made three unsuccessful attempts to target the trans gender community to make Carnival more diverse and accessible. We will continue to strive to achieve this goal.

We have achieved a key equality target to increase the participation of people with disabilities and we have continued to provide reasonable adjustments to make that happen and to actively recruit such individuals.

KEY FINDINGS

The following were the key findings of this review of our 2023/24 programme:

- a) The band was successful in achieving many of its planned outcomes but must take steps to address those areas where no improvements were evident.

- b) The arrest of our Deputy Band Leader for an alleged assault on a Police Officer and the CPS pursuing the case has left a sour note and affected our performance at Kingston Carnival.
- c) Key achievements:
 - first Mas Band to feature all 6 genres of Mas in one performance
 - successful partnerships with UNISON Westminster, Staff Networks of RBK&C & City of Westminster & Paddington Arts.
 - Productive creative Partnerships with Origins Moko Jumbies, Joan Sam (Burroquets) & Cayman Connection
 - Guest Monarch Mas Performers: Donna Philip-Forde, Deron Attzs, Donna Fox, Georgina Kerford & Samantha Hudson.
 - 25 activities with 24 successfully completed
 - Ten Carnival Bursaries completed satisfactorily with a waiting list of 25 for 2024.
 - Successful participation for the 2nd time in Pride in London with 50 performers & Glastonbury with 4 costumes
 - Key accolades: Second Place, Adult Mas Band; First Place, DJ Soca on the Move Competition.
 - Very positive audience reception at all 24 events.
 - Successful and satisfactory compliance with Health and Safety, Child Protection, Environment & Sustainability and EDI Policies.
 - Increased support in kind from Savile Row Academy, Diageo and our lead designer, Helen Davenport
 - Our proposed taxonomy of Mas of 6 genres - Monarch, High, Dutty, Fun/Pretty, Street Fashion & T-shirt – received with no major push backs.
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- d) Pre-Carnival induction & training programme with facilities & services to prepare performers for 7 hours on the road focusing on safety, health & wellbeing. It is a marathon with several sprints in between.
- e) Unexpected positive response from NHCL to our musical mixes that may appear to be in breach of the music policy
- f) Factors affecting income and levels of participation:
 - Reduction of vehicle passes & together with NHC sanctions, loss of HOME income (£27k)
 - Late marketing of costumes (Band Premiere & Social Media postings)
 - Mas Camp duration of 4 weeks only
 - Cost of Living crisis
 - Unilateral cancellation of Monarch Mas by one creative and no refund received
 - Costumes paid for in 2023 archived for first use in 2024
- g) Factors affecting levels of satisfaction among performers, sponsors, parents, partners and service:
 - Use of professional and caring security personnel
 - Timely provision of goods & services
 - Opportunities to participate in several events
 - Professional support services to children, disabled and vulnerable adults
 - Free costumes on offer
 - Opportunity to join other bands
 - A Mas Camp
 - A designer to elevate the quality of our King & Queen costumes
- h) Artistic and operational targets for Carnival 2024:
 - Increase participation levels at Kingston & Pride
 - Comply more fully with Safeguarding and Child Protection demands
 - Improve performances and audience engagement at NHCL Judging point
 - Maintain reducing use of t-shirts for commercial branding/marketing

- Make Carnival Sunday (NHC) exclusive for children with nil costume fees & 50 children in costumes.
- Maintain updated digital/social media/website facilities
- Revisit engagement with Trans & LGBTQ+ performers
- Secure assurances from NHCL terms of engaging commercial sponsors
- Separate registration with Julie's Bicycle, separate from Paddington Arts Centre



Vino Patel
Chair, Elimu Mas Academy
16th June 2024